USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS PROJECT

MID-2015 – SEPTEMBER 2016 | IMPLEMENTER: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE |
PLANNED BUDGET: $980,000

Currently there are over 300,000 unidentified remains in government cemeteries and up to possibly millions of others still missing. To identify them, the Government of Vietnam has formed Project 150 to assist Vietnamese labs but many remain unprepared for this enormous task, and are in need of stronger links with the private sector. The USAID Project to Build Vietnam's Capacity to Identify Vietnamese Unidentified Remains (Unidentified Remains Project) works with public and private labs in Vietnam to identify the remains of Vietnamese civilians and soldiers on both sides of the conflict killed during the war. To assist in this undertaking, USAID signed a Statement of Cooperation in March 2015 with the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology (VAST) to strengthen scientific and technological cooperation, especially with the Academy's Institute of Biotechnology.

BUILDS TECHNICAL CAPACITY OF FORENSIC LABS

The program partners Vietnamese labs with experts from the United States to train and provide technical assistance on forensic human identification, quality assurance processes, and assistance with laboratory setup and equipment. It is helping laboratories improve laboratory workspace, including assistance with laboratory design, instrument selection and information management. The program trains lab assistants and lab managers of DNA laboratories to determine the best scientific human identification methods. As a result, VAST and other Vietnamese forensic laboratories can better identify combatants' and war victims' remains through DNA analysis and kinship matching.

The program also supports Vietnamese participation in international conferences where forensic scientists present new techniques and research in human identification. It is helping laboratories prepare for future accreditation under the applicable standards issued by the International Organization for Standardization.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The project will complete at least 1,000 training days in DNA analysis, develop or refine 20 DNA-related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and improve 15 DNA-related processes.

In the photo: Lab assistants receive training in human forensic identification.